



## Marie Louise Heffernan

CEnv, MCIEEM, MSc

### Summary Experience

1997-2020 Aster Environmental Consultants Ltd  
Ecologist (Director)

1995-1996 Global Action Plan  
Programme manager. Empowering local communities to change their lifestyles for environmental benefits.

1990-1993 Research Biochemist MAFF/DEFRA (UK)  
Research Biochemist (Scientific officer) Investigation of plant secondary compounds as environmentally friendly bird repellents.

### Aster Environmental Consultants

Aster Environmental Consultants Ltd has been in existence since 1997 and is a limited company since 2001. Aster consists of Marie Louise Heffernan plus administration staff (Finance and secretarial). Contractors of are employed as required. Since 1997 time we have managed a hundreds of projects including the [following selected relevant recent examples](#)

#### 2019 Mayo County Council

Aster is currently preparing of Guidelines for Habitats Directive Assessments for staff of Mayo County Council with training to follow in March 2020

#### 2019 Regional Waste Inspectorate

Aster has carried out training in respect of NIS/AA Screening for staff of the Water inspectorate dealing with closed landfill sites. This has included preparing flow charts of responsibilities. Identification of competent authorities and differentiating between mitigation and works required irrespective of the Natura 2000 network.

Eighty staff were trained in AA screening and use of a template in 2016.

#### DOB

26/08/1968

#### Address

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#### Phone

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#### Current Position

Ecological Consultant and Director

Aster Environmental Consultants

#### Educational Qualifications

- M.Sc. Environmental Science TCD 1995
- MSc Qualifier Birkbeck College 1993
- Diploma Applied Biology DIT 1989

#### Professional Qualifications

- Chartered Environmentalist 2005
- Full Member of CIEEM 2001

#### Key Skills

- Project Management
- Ecological Assessment
- Fieldwork skills
- EIA Management
- Farm planning skills
- Training
- Communication skills
- Computer skills (Office/GIS)

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## Additional Training

Effective Board Membership IPA  
2019

Wetland Identification Sept 2018

Flora of woodland and Bogs June  
2017

Bat survey and mitigation 2016

QGIS training 2015

Train the trainer 2015

River invertebrate identification  
2014

Grass/Sedge identification 2006

Q value Assessment 2005

## Licence Holder

Freshwater Pearl Mussel Stage 1  
survey 2003

Freshwater Pearl Mussel Stage 1  
survey 2018

Freshwater Pearl Mussel Stage 1  
survey 2019

## Training /Education Experience

Aster is linked to the Ecology Centre Letterfrack. We have trained over 500 people to date in use of the existing 2009 DEHLG Appropriate Assessments guidelines. Emphasis is put on compliance with the regulatory framework in the context of case law.

Examples in the last 9 years are

February 2020 Appropriate Assessments for Ecologists

Nov 2019 CIEEM Appropriate Assessments for Ecologists

May 2017 Appropriate Assessment for Ecologists

Nov 2017 CIEEM Intermediate AA for ecologists

Jan 2017 Marine Institute – Appropriate Assessment and EIA Training – Clonakilty

June 2016 Waste Licencing division of local government 3 regions (trained 80 people)

May 2015 CIEEM training on Appropriate Assessment for other professional ecologists

November 2015 Habitat Directive Assessments Training NUIG

May 2015 CIEEM training on Appropriate Assessment for other professional ecologists

Feb 2015 Marine Institute Appropriate Assessment and EIA training

Jan 2015 Trained Galway County Council staff in Habitat Directive Assessments.

October 2011 Appropriate Assessment and Natura 2000 training Course. A one day CDP course ran for professionals attendees included attendance by An Taisce, EPA and Biodiversity Ireland.

Other courses that we regularly hold there include Seaweed identification and Bog investigations. We occasionally get experts to deliver courses e.g. Tina Aughney (bats) , John Conaghan (botany) and Stephen McCormack (river invertebrates).

## Summary Impact Assessment Experience

### Appropriate Assessment Experience

Since 2010 Aster have prepared hundreds of appropriate assessment screening/NIS for projects as diverse as Solar farms, Wind Farms, Quarries, Bridges, Business campus, water schemes, nursing homes, boathouses, housing projects and agricultural sheds.

### EIA Experience

We have also coordinated and prepared EIS for several quarries in the years 2015/2016. Aster have contributed the Flora/fauna Chapter to many EIS over the last 20 years. In particular specializing in quarries. .

- **Volunteering for Biodiversity**
- I was an IWeBS counter 1996-2004
- Gullimot Surey 2003
- NEWS Survey 2016
- I am a volunteer with BCI
- Ongoing records submitted to biodiversity Ireland
- 
- **Registered Training Provider**
- Engineers Ireland
- CIEEM

Marie Louise Heffernan has been working as an ecologist since 1995. She has the following experience working in a range of habitats and on species.

## Habitats /Survey Experience

### Terrestrial Experience

Marie Louise has prepared conservation plans and a range of impact assessments for bogs (Blanket), heaths, grasslands, machair, woodlands and limestone pavement. She was a registered farm planner with the Dept of Agriculture from 2009 to 2012.

She has carried out basic bat, fox, stoat and badger surveys

### Freshwater Aquatic

Marie Louise has experience preparing conservation plans for rivers and freshwater lakes and carried out impact assessments for a wide range of projects with promoters are diverse as IFI, OPW, NRA, County Councils and private individuals.

Surveys have included Freshwater Pearl Mussel, Otter, lamprey habitat and water birds (breeding and wintering).

Also I am a board member of Inland Fisheries Ireland since 2019.

### Marine Experience

Marie Louise is a Scientific advisor to the Aquaculture Licence appeals board. Mainly carrying out assessments of licence applications for oyster cultivation within designated areas.

She has also surveyed wintering birds in estuaries and bays on east and west coasts of Ireland under the IWeBs and NEWS surveys.

## Marie Louise Heffernan

### National Park and Wildlife Service Experience

#### Conservation Plans Natura 2000 sites

I prepared 35 Natura 2000 Conservation Plans for NPWS over a period of 10 years from 1997 to 2007. This included SACs, SPAs and aquaculture zoning plans.

#### Public Consultation

I carried out the public consultation for NPWS with landowners for destocking of the Owenduff Nephin Complex SAC and for cessation of turf cutting at Lough Coy in 2000.

#### SPA and SAC Appeals

I have prepared Appeals for landowners and presented a case for the exclusion from designated sites on scientific grounds to the Designated Area Advisory Appeals Board. I have represented over 170-farmers in this regard.

#### SPA Boundary Review

I co-ordinated an extension of 68 SPA boundaries with Jackie Hunt for NPWS in 2005/6. We designed parameters for boundary revision and had a team of 8 ecologists to carry out data collation and field work. We reported to John Wilson and Mike Wyse Jackson.

#### Common Scoter National Survey

I was part of a team who planned and conducted the fieldwork for the 2013 National Survey of Common Scoter. We also produced a wildlife manual for NPWS. We reported to David Tierney.

#### Volunteering:

I am part of a three person committee who organise the Green festival in Letterfrack. This aims to raise awareness and drive conservation action.

We are now in our 6<sup>th</sup> year.

#### Board Experience

I am currently on the board of Inland Fisheries Ireland.

In 2013 -2015 I was Chairperson of the local Childcare board – Rainbows End

In 1998 -2000 I was a board member of Global Action Plan. An NGO dedicated to reduce reuse recycle.

Hunt, J., **Heffernan, M.L.**, Mcloughlin, D., Benson, C. & Huxley, C. (2013) The Breeding Status Of Common Scoter, Melanitta Nigra In Ireland, 2012. Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 66. National Parks And Wildlife Service, Department Of The Arts, Heritage And The Gaeltacht, Ireland.

**M. L. Heffernan** (2013) An Easy Guide to Garden Birds of Britain and Ireland Aster Publications Galway

**Heffernan, M.L.** (2013) Clifden Tidy Towns Biodiversity Plan 2014 to 2018

**Heffernan, M.L.** and Hunt, J. (2007). A survey of breeding gulls and terns on **Lough Corib**, Co.'s Galway and Mayo Report to the Heritage Council.

**Heffernan, M.L.** and Hunt, J. (2007). **Mink trapping** at Lough Mask 2007 to protect breeding gulls Report to the Heritage Council.

**Heffernan, M.L.** and Hunt, J. (2006). A survey of the Lough Mask breeding gull population. Report to the Heritage Council.

**Heffernan, M.L.** and Hunt, J. (2004). A pre-breeding census of the Common Scoter Melanitta nigra on Loughs Conn and Cullin, Co. Mayo. Irish Birds 7

**Heffernan, M.L.** and Hunt, J. (2003). **A survey of the Freshwater Pearl Mussels in the Dawros River**. Report to the Heritage Council.

**M. L. Heffernan** (1999) A Review Of The Ecological Implications Of Mariculture And Intertidal Harvesting In Ireland. Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 7. National Parks And Wildlife Service, Department Of The Arts, Heritage And The Gaeltacht, Ireland.

**M. L. Heffernan** (1995) MSc Environmental Science thesis "Aquaculture and Bird Protection interactions in Special Protection Areas"

Gill, E. L., M. B. Serra, S. B. Canavelli, C. J. Feare, M. E. Zaccagnini, A. K. Nadian, **M. L. Heffernan**, and R. W. Watkins. (1994). Cinnamamide prevents captive chestnut-capped blackbirds from eating rice. Int. J. Pest Manage. 40(2): 195-198.

